

Campus Food Security Program Grant Application & Annual Survey Glossary & FAQs

About This Document

This guide provides a Glossary and FAQ section to help both campus pantry managers and financial/administrative staff complete the Swipe Grant Application and the annual Campus Leader Survey documents accurately and consistently.

Acknowledgment Statement

This survey and grant application, conducted by Swipe Out Hunger, seeks valuable feedback and insights from campus partners involved in food security initiatives. The data collected will be used to enhance our understanding of campus food insecurity, improve our programs and services, and strengthen partnerships to better serve students in need.

These forms are best completed by the people on your campus who are leading food access initiatives, as questions will request specific operational and financial data — including pantry distribution totals, program budgets, SNAP enrollment support, and student demographics. Swipe Out Hunger understands that your campus may not be collecting in-depth data at this time, so estimates are appropriate when needed. A glossary of key terms and an FAQ section are available to help guide your responses. Please complete both forms to the best of your ability.



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Glossary

The following terms appear across the grant application and annual survey. Definitions are written for both pantry program staff and financial/administrative staff.

Budget & Financial Terms

<i>Term</i>	<i>Definition</i>
Allocated Budget	The total amount of funds officially approved and set aside for your program at the start of the academic year, before any spending occurs.
Total Program Budget	The overall financial plan for your program, including all anticipated income and expenses for the full academic year.
Total Program Expenses	The actual amount spent by your program by the end of the academic year across all categories (food, staffing, operations, etc.).
Fiscal Arrangement	A formal agreement between your program and another organization (e.g., a foundation or nonprofit) that allows your program to receive tax-exempt donations or grants on your behalf.
Tax-Exempt Status	A legal designation— typically 501(c)(3) for nonprofits — that allows your organization to receive charitable donations and certain grants without those funds being taxed.



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Food Security Program Terms

Term	Definition
Primary Funding Source	The single largest source of financial support for your program (e.g., student fees, university allocation, grants, donations).
Campus Pantry	An on-campus facility or program that provides free food and essential items to students, faculty, or staff experiencing food insecurity.
Food Security	Having reliable access to a sufficient quantity of affordable, nutritious food. Food insecurity is the lack of this access.
Food Bank Partner	A regional or national food bank organization (e.g., the Feeding America network) that supplies bulk food items to your campus pantry at low or no cost.
Item Distribution Totals	The total number or weight of food and essential items distributed through your pantry over the course of the academic year.
Unique Individuals Served	The count of distinct people (not repeat visits) who received food or services from your pantry during the academic year.
Operational Needs	The resources, staffing, equipment, or infrastructure your pantry requires to function effectively (e.g., refrigeration, volunteer hours, software).
Food Recovery	The process of collecting unused food on campus and in the community for redistribution.
Hunger Free Campus	Swipe Out Hunger is the original architect of the Hunger Free Campus Bill, which sends funding to public colleges that are addressing student hunger on campus. Since its passage in California, each state that has adopted it has customized it to its unique needs.



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SNAP & Benefits Terms

Term	Definition
SNAP	The acronym for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, a federal program that provides monthly food purchasing benefits to eligible low-income individuals and families via an EBT card.
SNAP Enrollment & Referral Support	Services provided by your program to help students apply for SNAP benefits, understand eligibility, or connect with enrollment assistance.
EBT (Electronic Benefits Transfer)	The card system used to distribute SNAP benefits, similar to a debit card, which is accepted at authorized grocery retailers.
SNAP Eligibility	The income and household criteria a person must meet to qualify for SNAP benefits. College students often have specific eligibility rules.

Swipe Grant Process Terms

Term	Definition
Primary Challenge	The single most significant barrier or need your program is facing that the Swipe grant funding would most directly address.
Secondary Challenge	An additional, supporting barrier or need that the grant funding would help address beyond the primary challenge.
Grant Plans / Use of Funds	A brief description of how your program intends to spend grant funds if awarded, including specific programs, purchases, or initiatives.
Advancement / Development Office	The campus department responsible for fundraising, alumni giving, and grant management. Being connected to this office can expand funding opportunities.



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Campus Leader Survey & Data Collection Terms

Term	Definition
Academic Enrollment	The total number of students officially enrolled at your institution for the given academic year (typically fall + spring headcount or unduplicated annual count).
Intake Data	Information collected from students when they first access your program or visit the pantry, such as enrollment status, major, or household size.
Data Points	Specific individual pieces of information tracked about students served, such as their campus affiliation, year in school, or frequency of pantry visits.
Academic Breaks	Periods when classes are not in session (winter break, spring break, summer). Programs may reduce hours or close during these times.

Frequently Asked Questions

These FAQs address common questions from both pantry managers and administrative staff completing the grant application or annual survey.

Budget & Financial Questions

Q: What is the difference between the budget and expenses questions?

A: The budget question asks what you planned to spend at the start of the year (your allocation). The expenses question asks what you actually spent by the end of the year. These numbers may differ — that is normal and expected.

Q: What if our program did not receive a formal campus allocation?

A: If your program is entirely grant- or donation-funded, enter \$0 for the campus allocation and note your actual funding sources in the relevant field.

Q: Should I include in-kind donations in our budget or expense totals?

A: Include only cash and cash-equivalent funds unless otherwise specified. You may note in-kind contributions (donated food, volunteer hours) separately in the narrative fields.



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Swipe Grant Application Questions

Q: Is my campus program eligible if we received a grant from Swipe Out Hunger in the last 12 months?

A: Yes, any past recipients of funding from Swipe Out Hunger who meet the eligibility criteria mentioned are welcome to apply for a Swipe Grant.

Q: Is 501(c)(3) status required for my campus program to receive a Swipe Grant?

A: No, 501(c)(3) status is not a prerequisite for Swipe Grant eligibility.

Q: Does the program need to already be in place at the campus to qualify for this funding, or can Swipe Grants be used to establish a new program?

A: We try to be flexible and work with applicants at various stages. If you're in the process of establishing a new program, please fill out the application with the information you have and note at the end that you are in the process of launching a program. Our team may reach out to learn more about your progress and explore how we can support you.

Q: Can our primary and secondary challenges be related?

A: Yes, they can overlap as long as they are distinct issues. For example, your primary challenge might be insufficient storage capacity, and your secondary might be the resulting inability to accept food bank donations.

Q: What should I include in our plans for the funding?

A: Keep it concise (2-4 sentences). Focus on the specific use of funds: what you will purchase, hire, or launch, and how it directly addresses your stated challenge(s).

Q: What if we are not connected to a campus foundation or advancement office?

A: Select 'No' and use any available notes field to briefly explain why (e.g., your program is entirely student-run, or your campus does not have this infrastructure).

Q: Does tax-exempt status affect our eligibility for the grant?

A: Not necessarily. However, some grant funding sources require it. This question helps us understand whether your program can receive restricted grant funds directly or needs a fiscal sponsor.



Q: Can I apply on behalf of another campus?

A: No, you cannot apply on behalf of another campus. Each campus must submit its own application to ensure that the information provided is accurate and reflects the specific needs and details of that campus. Instead, please work with the appropriate contact person at the other campus and share our [Swipe Grants webpage](#) and these FAQs to assist them in completing their own application.

Q: Can I share the application with another campus?

A: Yes! You can assist them by sharing our [Swipe Grants webpage](#), which provides detailed information on eligibility requirements and application instructions, ensuring they are well-informed throughout the process.

Q: Can I submit more than one application for my campus program?

A: No, you cannot submit more than one application for your campus program. Submitting multiple applications will not increase your chances of selection. This year, applications will be evaluated based on need, so please ensure that you submit a single, detailed application that accurately reflects your program's needs.

Food Security & Survey Questions

Q: How do I count unique individuals if we do not track repeat visits?

A: If you use sign-in software or ID scanning, pull the count of distinct IDs for the year. If you do not track individuals, provide your best estimate and note that it is an estimate.

Q: What counts as a 'food security program'?

A: Any campus initiative designed to reduce student hunger or food insecurity, including pantries, meal swipe donation programs, emergency meal funds, CalFresh/SNAP outreach, or community fridges.

Q: How should we handle distribution totals if we distribute by item count and/or by weight?

A: Select each metric you consistently track from the checklist. If you track multiple metrics, provide each value in their respective follow-up question. (e.g., '2,500 items / 4,200 lbs').



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SNAP Questions

Q: What if our campus does not offer SNAP Enrollment & Referral Support?

A: Select 'Not offered' or 'N/A' where applicable. The challenges and frequency questions can be skipped or marked as not applicable.

Q: Who is typically eligible for SNAP as a college student?

A: Federal rules restrict SNAP for most college students, but many exceptions apply (e.g., working 20+ hours/week, caring for a dependent, or meeting income-based criteria). Your campus benefits navigator can provide guidance.

Data & Technology Questions

Q: What technology options should I list if we only use paper sign-in sheets?

A: Select or write in 'Paper / Manual tracking.' Knowing how programs currently collect data helps identify where technology support may be most useful.

Q: We serve multiple populations — which should I select?

A: Select all that apply. This includes undergraduate students, graduate students, staff, faculty, community members, or any other groups your pantry formally or informally serves.

For questions about completing these forms, please contact your program coordinator or grants administrator.

If you have any further questions about your campus's eligibility or Campus Leader Survey status, please email programs@swipehunger.org.



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